

Oxford Feb. 7. 1846 —

Rev A. A. Phelps

My very Dear Brother }

My mind is greatly occupied with the controversy in which you are engaged, & its collateral issues. In its practical bearings, I mean an practical holiness it is, if I mistake not, the ~~most~~ ^{as} important ^{as} controversy ~~that~~ ^{as} our churches have been engaged in the past 100 years. The half-way covenant controversy, the great unitarian controversy even, was not more vital than this. Your articles of course I have read, with all that brethren B. & S. and others on that side have had to say. I have this moment laid down Quodell's 2nd article on Anger sins, (p. 1 I presume ^{as it is} from the Investigator) and I am prepared to take & maintain this ground, that the Board, in adopting, classifying, sum-
ming ^{aloud} ~~exhausting~~, over the world, & clearing the
tick of time to the end of all things, this
antiscriptural, licentious, ~~unscriptural~~ ^{the offense of teaching} doctrine
have been chargeable with actual, vital cor-
ruption; & must, from this time, be
^{be put upon the defensive} ~~transacted~~ ~~transacted~~ ~~transacted~~ until they re-
pent. My heart is full. I cannot resist this
feeling. The Board, the A. Board, with which

all my earliest, & strongest religious affections
stood apart, has become ~~more~~ corrupt-
stands up before you, the churches, & the
ministers, as the great patron, & superior
of sin - hypocrite sin indeed, but nevertheless sin.

The doctrine of immediate repentance, has
always been vital in the evangelical system
of doctrine, as distinguished from hyper-
Calvinism, & lax Arminianism. It is what
you & I have always preached. Observe after
we take the anxious sinner, in the study, in
the Inquiring meeting, in the Lecture room, & in
the ^{the} pulpit, to repent, & repent at once, as presenting
the only hope of pardon. You condemn it, we
say, all his claims are imperative, uncomprom-
ising. He gives you not a moments time
to persist in ^{any} ~~your~~ sin. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck
it out." Do it, & do it instantly. Sinners of every
grade & character have, to be sure, felt it to be a
hard ~~doctrine~~ doctrine - pressing them up into
a close corner, ^{& subjecting them to untold inconveniences.} And yet we have preached it. The
evangelical ministry of the country has preached
it. The members of the church, in their ^{own} pulpits,
have preached it: & glorious have been the re-
sults. Thousands upon thousands have yielded
to Gods claims, & found peace, & hope, & heaven.

But what are ^{we} told now? The A. B. C. Book
comes along, in its corporate capacity, & says,
holla. You are going too far & too fast. The

general doctrine of immediate repentance we
admit. But there is one sin, oppression,
which should be one, extending over this
land, & all lands, in regard to which, especially
when it is "organic", entrenched & fortified
behind the forms of law, God relaxes his
demands, in other cases imperative, & com-
promising. In regard to this ^{sin}, God
grants a dispensation — gives the transgressor
— or time to turn himself, — "indefinite" ^{length} to be
sure, or to turn, but all reasonable time.

The old hyper Calvinist used to say that
it took at least 9 months ^{for the sinner} to get religion.
& if the Board must needs ~~fix~~ set aside
the presumptuous claims of God, & give
the sinner any time to ^{repent} ~~do as for~~ ~~do~~
quash of repentance. I should like
it much better if they had fixed some
time, (say if you please 2 years) instead of
having that point all open, & indefinitely.
The unlimited license to sin is a bad thing
to get along with.

But my shirt is full, & I have not ^{yet} touched
upon the points I had in view when I
began. Thanks, however, to cheap postage. Two
shirts will cost no more ^{than} ~~more~~ ~~than~~ ~~are~~, &
therefore I will go on. ^{still} the two things
I had especially in view.

(1) Ought we not now to change our
mode of action with the board? Instead

of presenting further inquiries, I recommend
asking them to do so & so. Suppose we pre-
^{a newspaper; shipping} sent distinct charges of moral delinquen-
cy, teaching heury, & corrupt doctrine.

To do this effectually, suppose the document
be drawn up carefully & maturely ~~to be~~ signed
by all the Homanary members in the
country, lay & clerical, whose views sympathize
with ours on the subject; to be presented at the
next meeting: & the time between be taken to
get this thing up right. I presume there are
are or two hundred, perhaps more, Homanary
members scattered all over the free states
whose signatures to such a document could
be obtained, by beginning in season. It seems
to me that a thing of this kind got up right
by putting the Board on the defensive, ~~and~~
& by putting ^{ourselves} ~~ourselves~~ in a consistent posi-
tion before the world, must be atten-
ded with good results. If the measure
should fail to bring the Board to repentance
that is, to change its position, it would at
least aid us much in carrying forward
our new organization for missionary
purposes - a measure that must espe-
cially come, if the Board stands un-
yielding.

If you have access to one of ^{the} Board, can
send Reports containing a list of Homanary
Members, just look it over, & see how many
you can find of known abolition views.

Perhaps, if you think favorably of a measure of this kind, you will take the opportunity while at Syracuse, to lay the matter before such brethren as you will meet there, for their consideration. I ~~for~~ ^{it may be} ~~preliminary~~ ^{preliminary} action. If the measure should be resolved upon after due consultation, in order to get the signatures, ^{desired.} it would be necessary some months before the meeting to send the document, perhaps as a circular, to all the brethren referred to.

(2) The other point to which I wish to call your attention is this. Is it not now the time to call up the close corporation feature of the Band? This feature is manifestly un-ecumenical, oligarchical, & unchristian, un-brotherly, & unjust. I well remember the ground argument employed when the Band ~~was~~ ^{was} in justifying ^{the thing} ~~this~~ feature when the Band went into operation. It was urged as a wise & necessary precaution to keep the friends & influence of a great benevolent Institution from falling into the hands of Unitarians, Universalists and other opponents of evangelical truth. Well, the remedy ~~remedy~~ ^{remedy} has worked to a charm — has kept all heretics out, but has not kept the elite & choice spirits of the churches from becoming themselves heretics. ^(see page 10) The thing has worked very much like all paper ramparts against



Paid 5

Rev. A. A. Phelps
New York

per
J. N. B.

Exchd. Feb. 7. 1846.

Rev. J. A. Barber,